

PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE PHILIPPIANS

Phil 1:1-11

A. HISTORY – Acts 16:6-31

1. It was founded by Paul on his second missionary journey @ 50 a.d. Acts 16:6-10.
2. This epistle was written to them around 62 a.d. or about 12 years after it was established and about 30 years after the death of Christ.
3. Its first converts were Lydia and the Philippian jailer (and some believe the girl from who he cast out the demon).
4. Epaphroditus brought this letter back to them after he took their gifts to Paul in Rome.

B. PAUL'S PRAYER OF THANKS – Phil. 1:3-8

This one of the few epistles that Paul wrote where he was not having to address doctrinal error or problems within the church. Perhaps that is why he opens by calling himself a slave/servant (doulos) instead of apostle. Only in Philippians, Thessalonians, and Philemon does he not open the epistle by calling himself an apostle.

1. For their fellowship in the gospel – v 5
 - a. fellowship = koinonia; sharing in common; partnership
 - b. from the first day til now = about 11-12 years
 - c. Paul often mentioned their support of his ministry – 2 Cor 11:9; Phil 4:15
2. Two views on the “good work” here
 - a. Some, like Wuest and Campbell say that in this specific context it refers to their support of Paul
 - b. Others say the good work refers to the forming of us into the image of Christ, Rom 8:29
 - c. But regardless of our view of what the particular good work is, God is the initiator and completer of good works in our lives
3. Day of Jesus Christ
 - a. Referring to rapture – 1 Thess 4:13
 - b. Not to be confused with the Day of the Lord
4. Defense = *apologia* = apologetics = defending – v 7
5. Confirmation = establishing, ratifying
6. Grace = THE grace = the grace of God bestowed on them in salvation

C. PAUL'S PRAYER OF CONCERN – Their fruit and God's glory - Phil. 1:9-11

1. Love abound more and more – v 9

2. Knowledge = full, complete knowledge
3. Discernment = proper application of knowledge
4. Approve things that are excellent
 - a. approve = to prove by testing
 - b. the idea is to prove to yourself by testing what is different from the rest and thus better
 - c. “To the degree that our love abounds in perfect knowledge and all discernment we will be able to prove the things differing...If we fail to abound in love which is in accordance with the truth for the body of Christ, the church, we have to reason to think we will have the spiritual capacity to prove the things differing.” Campbell
5. Filled with fruit that comes from righteousness
 - a. being filled with the fruit (singular, not plural) of righteousness
 - b. at a given point in time past, God filled us with the fruit of Christ’s righteousness
 - c. this is the only time uses the phrase “the fruit of righteousness” or the fruit that belongs to righteousness
 - d. Paul was often concerned about fruitfulness and good works -- Phil 4:17; 1Tim 6:18; Titus 2:7,14; 3:8,14; Col 1:10)
6. Resulting in: God’s glory

Note the progression:

1. Because they ARE filled with Christ’s righteousness
2. He prays that this righteousness might express itself through a growing in knowledge and perceptive love
3. Through the spiritual ability to prove things which differ
4. And through lives that are pure and without offense
5. Resulting in God’s praise and glory